

**MINUTES
CITY OF LAKE WORTH
JOINT CITY COMMISSION
COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY
WORKSHOP MEETING
JULY 17, 2008 – 5:00 PM**

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Clemens on the above date at 5:05 PM in the Lake Worth Scottish Rite Masonic Center, located at 2000 North "D" Street, Lake Worth, Florida.

I. ROLL CALL:

City Commission:

Present were Mayor Jeff Clemens and Commissioners Cara Jennings (arrived 5:28 PM), Jo-Ann Golden, and Dave Vespo. Vice Mayor Retha Lowe was absent. Also present were City Manager Robert Baldwin and City Clerk Pamela Lopez.

Community Redevelopment Agency:

Present were Chairperson Mark Rickards; Vice-Chairperson Brendan Lynch; Ms. Shanon Materio (arrived 5:06 PM); and Messrs. Wes Blackman, Matthew Constantine, Edward Grimm, and Wayne Marcinkoski. Also present were Executive Director Joan Oliva and Attorney David Tolces.

II. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Discuss the Community Redevelopment Agency budget

Chairperson Rickards explained in detail the Community Redevelopment Agency's (CRA) priorities.

Commissioner Golden asked why there was a lot of money allocated to the commercial area and if most of the CRA's money came from commercial properties. She said the money should be allocated to the most impacted areas.

Chairperson Rickards answered that 34% of the base taxable value was from improved commercial properties and 20% from single family residential. He explained that the Green Building program was used as an incentive to the façade and tenant improvement grants.

Commissioner Vespo asked for an explanation about the Residential Redevelopment program.

Ms. Oliva answered that the funds were offered for emergency repairs to

residents earning below a certain income level. She explained that the CRA's budget was based on the City's Fiscal Year 07/08 millage.

Commissioner Jennings said she was disappointed that more tax rebate funds went to the Lucerne Condominium complex and not to an affordable housing program. She asked if the median income guidelines could be changed to reflect Lake Worth's income level, not the County.

Chairperson Rickards explained that a smaller amount of funds was allocated for land acquisition than last year's budget. He said the Agency needed to take a more aggressive role in land acquisition.

Commissioner Jennings asked about Other Contractual Services-Streetscape funds and if the CRA discussed using funds to pay for youth crime programs.

Ms. Oliva answered that Streetscape funds would be used for street and paver cleaning along 6th Avenue South, 10th Avenue North, and the downtown area streets. She explained that funds from the Community Aide grant could be used for youth crime programs.

Mr. Lynch said private foundations or donors usually were willing to provide matching funds for youth crime programs.

Chairperson Rickards said the Agency would be willing to have further discussion regarding funding youth crime programs.

Mayor Clemens said the Agency members did a wonderful job putting the budget together. He welcomed the two new members and thanked Matthew Constantine for his years of services.

Mr. Constantine thanked the CRA members, Commission, and staff for all their support and help. He said he had gained more than he had given to the Agency. His membership was a rewarding experience and his fondness for the City had increased.

Mayor Clemens asked about the reduced amount of funds allocated to land acquisition and if it was possible to obtain a bond or loan for land acquisitions, particularly for the west side of the downtown area. He supported leveraging funds to purchase land around the Florida East Coast railway corridor.

Attorney Tolce explained that the Florida Supreme Court had not rendered an opinion regarding a case. He said that obtaining a long-term bond or loan was currently limited.

Commissioner Golden asked why no funds were allocated for parks, why there was a \$55,000 increase for salaries, a 20% increase in professional services, and if the CRA planned to hire more people.

Chairperson Rickards explained that the Agency would discuss parks at their August meeting, the proposed budget did not include any funds for parks, and the current staffing level was small.

Ms. Oliva explained that not enough money was included in last year's budget for salaries. The proposed budget included a Project Manager position. If the position was needed, the funds would be available in the budget.

Commissioner Golden recommended Police Officers shut off and leave their vehicles to talk to the community.

Ms. Oliva explained that the Police Officers performed community policing and already walked through the neighborhoods.

Commissioner Jennings asked if funding was allocated to install speed control devices on the gateways.

Chairperson Rickards explained that money was in the budget for speed control devices. There was discussion on getting prices for the design.

Mr. Blackman said the most important thing about the budget was that there was a 5.3% loss in Tax Increment Financing (TIF) funds. The Agency's money supply source was TIF funds, which were used to better the community. The focus was on finding ways to attract redevelopment to the City, particularly west of Dixie Highway. It was important to look at how the City treated business developers and how the City appeared in the market. The CRA could focus on economic programs and get a market study as a way to generate more tax revenues.

Mr. Grimm announced there were 800 homesteaded properties within the CRA's district, which represented less than 30% in home ownership. The City would not be able to have a sustainable community until the percentage of home ownership increased.

Mr. Marcinkoski said he supported spending money in neighborhoods. Over three years, the CRA's budget had doubled.

Chairperson Rickards said there was discussion with the Utilities Department about the CRA installing a new water main along 10th Avenue North. The Agency included \$650,000 in the budget for the water main. He asked the City if it had included money in their budget to reimburse the CRA.

He explained that the budget was developed with the assumption that the City would maintain its own Police Department. He said there was discussion about either creating another CRA area or extending the CRA's boundaries to include the Park of Commerce. He asked if the Commission would support

adding the Park of Commerce area into the CRA's boundaries.

Public participation:

Peter Timm said the main purpose of the CRA was to eliminate slum and blight; however, the members were spending money on beautification instead. He said he did not want to turn the City into an "affordable for the poor" town for one group of people. The CRA district was not located in the City's most slum and blighted areas, and the members could not spend money outside of the district. He suggested the City invoice the CRA for every cost within their district and asked the members to concentrate on eliminating slum and blight.

Mary Lindsey said it was a great opportunity to have the joint meeting. She recommended bringing proposed projects before neighborhood associations for their input and asked the CRA to increase the number of Community Aide grants awarded.

Vince Rogers said Tropical Ridge Neighborhood Association was awarded a grant from the CRA. He recommended providing affordable housing to teachers, said there was a need for code enforcement within the CRA's district, there were too many properties that had code violations in the Tropical Ridge neighborhood, and community policing and crime walks were working.

Drew Martin advised that he was glad money was in the budget for code compliance and policing. He said he was concerned with the CRA not focusing on fixing up blighted structures, asked the CRA to purchase the Champion Tree property on North "A" Street to develop a park, asked for \$50,000 in the budget to purchase native trees, recommended the use of the Rainbarrel program to capture water for tree irrigation, asked that more recycling bins be available during Evening On The Avenues events, and asked that money be available for energy efficiency grants.

Dee McNamara said the meeting was scheduled at 5 PM to shut out the public, the City gave away its property on North "F" Street to the County Health Department, said she was glad about the crime walk program, and asked that financial assistance be given to the owner of the Hummingbird Inn because he was too embarrassed to ask for assistance himself.

Mayor Clemens advised there was no need for another joint meeting to finalize the CRA's budget.

Mr. Marcinkoski asked if the Commission would be open to expanding the CRA's boundaries to include the Park of Commerce. He said discussion regarding purchasing the Champion Tree property should be discussed further.

Mayor Clemens cited several line items, totaling \$900,000, that were allocated

to neighborhood programs.

Commission comments on miscellaneous issues:

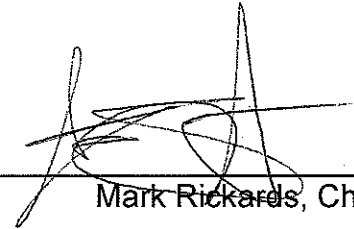
Commissioner Jennings asked that more information regarding the *City Times* newsletter be added before it went "to print."

Mayor Clemens announced that during a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) meeting there was discussion regarding school crossing guards for Middle School students. The MPO members recommended the Palm Beach County School Board bus students from the area west of I-95 and 10th Avenue North. He said the Commission may have to attend the School Board's meeting to have further discussion.

Mayor Clemens announced there would be a meeting between staff and the Police Benevolent Association at 10 AM on July 21, 2008, to discuss a merger with the Palm Beach Sheriff's Office. He said he may have to call a special Commission on the issue within the next couple of weeks.

III. ADJOURNMENT:

Consensus: To adjourn the meeting at 6:35 PM.



Mark Rickards, Chairman

ATTEST:

Emilia Theodossakos, Recording Secretary

Minutes Approved:

A digital audio recording of this meeting will be available in the Office of the City Clerk for two years following approval of these minutes.